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XIII.—THE VOWS OF BALDWIN.

A STUDY IN MEDIEVAL FICTION.

Although one of the most interesting of Middle English romances, the *Avowing of Arthur* has been singularly neglected. The story is told with the gratifying freshness which marks *Gawain and the Green Knight* and the other poems of the Northern school. The incidents of which the story is composed are fitted into the general framework with rare skill. Even more striking is the vividness of the characterization. The ordinary romance character is a dummy upon which are hung splendid clothes tagged with catalogues of all the virtues. Dealing with these personages is often like handling the bits of cardboard stamped "sugar," "tea," "potatoes," with which students in commercial colleges play. But in this romance there is sharp distinction between Arthur, genial, brave, a practical joker, and Baldwin, a man of few words, cynical without being bitter, nonchalant, a man of deeds; between Kay, impulsive, always getting into scrapes, inclined to jeer at others, a great boy with a boy's love of adventure, and Gawain, the courteous knight, equally ready to aid beauty in distress and to assist a comrade in time of need. The story is crowded with incidents, and the verse is vigorous and effective.

The literary relations of this romance are interesting and important. With the possible exception of a political poem entitled the *Vows of the Heron*, we have in it the best example in English of the singular custom of "gabbing," while it is certainly not inferior to the more famous French romance of boastful vowing, the *Pèlerinage Charlemagne*. The hunting of the boar seems to be a late popular redaction

of one of the most elaborate of Celtic tales. The stories of Gawain and Kay, while of the stock type, are given with new vivacity by this Northern poet and introduce some of the most interesting characteristics of chivalric romance. The three vows of Baldwin, against jealousy, lack of hospitality, and cowardice, with the adventures which follow upon his keeping of them, indicate a relationship of structure between this romance and an extremely widespread class of popular fictions. Finally, in the vow against jealousy and the test to which Baldwin is subjected the romance is brought into connection with a class of tales with which Shakspere's *Cymbeline* is pretty certainly related. Other incidents have sources less interesting, while as a document which throws considerable light upon English life in mediæval times this romance is not unimportant. All in all, it would be difficult to find a Middle English romance with literary relations more significant and varied.

Nevertheless, the poem has been rarely referred to by scholars and no extended investigation has been published. The text has been printed but once, by Robson, for the Camden Society, in 1842. Brandl has a brief comment in Paul's *Grundriss*,¹ and another note was given by the late Gaston Paris.² Professor Kittredge some years ago noted a Latin "tragedy" in the *Poetria* of Johannes de Garlandia containing a story similar to that of the soldiers and the women.³ At another time I hope to discuss the boar-hunt, with its custom of vowing upon an animal and the possible relations of the romance to the famous *Kilhwch and Olwen*, and also the curious jumble of materials drawn from conventional chivalric romances. The aim of the present article is to discuss the vows of Baldwin and several problems which the last half of the poem suggests.

¹ I, 665.

² *Hist. Litt. de France*, xxx, 111 ff.

³ *M. L. N.*, viii, 251.

It will be remembered that upon hearing of the terrible depredations wrought by an immense wild boar, Arthur, who with his knights is at Carlisle, resolves to kill the monster. He takes with him Gawain, Kay, and Baldwin. After an unsuccessful attempt to kill the beast, Arthur vows to encounter him single-handed, and calls upon the others to make their vows. Gawain will watch all night by the tarn, Kay will ride up and down the forest ready to do battle should occasion present. Baldwin, who is characterized throughout the romance as a man of extreme taciturnity, given to deeds rather than words, and with a strong tinge of cynicism, makes three vows instead of one, and these are of a very peculiar character. His vows, made merely "to stinte oure stryfe," are never to be jealous of his wife; never to be afraid of death, and never to refuse his hospitality to any who may call upon him. Our interest is aroused (1) by the fact that he makes three vows, not one, as was the case in such ceremonies;¹ (2) by the striking differences between his vows and those of his companions. It will be noted that the vows made by Arthur, Gawain, and Kay each involved some deed of knighthood which was to be actually performed. But Baldwin had no wild beast to slay, no mysterious tarn to watch, no forest paths to guard. Again, his vows were apparently forgotten as soon

¹ For an excellent example of the custom of vowing upon an animal, cf. *The Vows of the Heron*, Wright, *Polit. Poems and Songs*, pp. 1 ff. That a considerable formality was observed in Arthurian romance finds abundant evidence, notably in *La Queste del Saint Graal* (ed. Furnivall, pp. 14 ff.) In general, it may be said that when some unusual event took place, or when some especially dainty dish was served at meat, it was the custom of Arthur to make a vow, and it became at once obligatory upon the chief knights to follow with their vows. As for vowing upon the boar, in particular, we may also cf. the *Hervar Saga*, in which we are told that men used to lead the Soma-boar before the king and men laid their hands on his bristles to make their vows. (*Corp. Poeticum Boreale* 1, 405-406.)

as uttered. We have no indications that he thought it necessary for him to alter his ordinary course of life, or that he even remembered his vows, until in the *dénouement* he explains how he came to make such vows. Thus the vows relate not to deeds which he swears to perform but to a philosophy of life which he has already long held. That this is true is made evident in the closing scene, where the philosopher-knight explains the time and the occasion which led him to come to each conclusion. A certain happening many years previously determined him that it was of no use to be jealous of a woman. Other experiences brought the conclusion that it is foolish to refuse hospitality and useless to fear death. Then it is evident that these were no new rules of conduct but were the statements of certain guiding principles of Baldwin's life, phrased as one may phrase New Year's resolutions. Thus the attitude of Baldwin toward the ceremony of vowing becomes very interesting. He listens with entire good humor while the king makes the somewhat foolish vow to attack the beast single-handed, and while the others make vows which will necessitate their spending a disagreeable if not a perilous night; then he satisfies the etiquette of the occasion by phrasing three principles constituting his philosophy of life. Having done this, he immediately forgets that he has vowed anything at all; a fact to be insisted on, because the vows, once made, become practically *geasa* upon him in that if he fails to observe the restrictions which they place upon his conduct he will be subject to ridicule and a certain disgrace.¹ Thus

¹ Celtic literature is full of references to *geasa*, or tabus, which were laid upon various heroes and became matters of life or death to them. Sometimes the heroes knew of these *geasa*; sometimes not. It was *geasa* for Diarmaid to hunt wild boars; his enemy knew this and craftily laid a trap by which Diarmaid was induced to hunt a monstrous boar. After a desperate fight the hero was slain. Professor Kittredge cites an Irish tale in

it is clear that Baldwin was subjected to three tests of his knighthood, though these tests were quite different from those usually found in Arthurian romance. He was unconscious that he was being tried; if he had failed in any of the tests he would have been held up to the ridicule of the court.

By this time, the peculiar structure of this part of the romance should be evident. In seeking an explanation, one must keep in mind not only the fact that he makes three vows, vows of an unusual type, instead of one, but that he is characterized throughout the story as a man given to sententious speech, that these vows are in reality maxims underlying his philosophy of life, and that while he is unconscious of the tests, failure to keep his vows will bring disaster.

THE "THREE COUNSELS" TYPE.

The number three, like the number seven, has long been sacred. Every reader of fairy tales knows how common are stories involving three wishes. In the Celtic poets songs frequently are constructed in a similar manner. For ex-

which a young champion defeats Morraha in a game of cards and says: "I lay on you the bonds of the art of the druid, not to sleep two nights in one house, nor finish a second meal at the one table, till you bring me the sword of light and news of the death of Anshgayliacht." (*Harv. Stud. and Notes*, VIII, 163.) Every man who entered Fenian ranks had four *geasa* laid upon him. "The first, never to receive a portion with a wife, but to choose her for good manners and virtues; the second, never to offer violence to any woman; the third, never to refuse any one for anything he might possess (*i. e.*, refuse to any one); the fourth, that no single warrior should ever flee before nine (*i. e.*, less than nine) champions." (Hyde, *Lit. Hist. Ireland*, p. 373.) This account of the conditions on which a hero was admitted to Fenianship is interesting because two of the *geasa* coincide with Baldwin's vows against cowardice and inhospitable action, and also because the four *geasa* form practically a code of morals, a statement of the qualities of the ideal knight.

ample, Caeilte sings of three things in great plenty, three sorts of music, three noises, three fruit crops, three sons, etc.¹

In the wisdom literature of the oriental peoples aphoristic sayings are grouped in the same fashion; the number three being the usual basis. A familiar example is found in the book of Proverbs.² Here the author uses the number three, but immediately changes to four by a fixed formula. "There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: the way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid." The same type of construction is used to explain the three (four) things that are never satisfied; the three (four) things for which the earth is disquieted; the four things which are little upon the earth, but are exceeding wise; and the three (four) things which are comely in going. Other examples in Hebrew wisdom literature are not hard to find.

If we turn to such Eastern books of wisdom as the Fables of Bidpai we note the same form for presenting maxims and aphorisms. Love of friends, we are told, is increased by three things: (1) that one should go to his friend's house; (2) that he should see his friend's wife and children; (3) that he should eat and drink in his friend's company.³ Again, "a wise man has said that there are three things with which only a madman of weak discernment will meddle, and whoever meddles with them shall in no wise escape from them. One of them is approach to a prince, the second, confidence in women concerning matters which are secret and terrible, and the third the conduct of the man who took deadly poison to try or test it."⁴

¹ *Silva Gadelica*, II, 111. A similar song is given on p. 124 of the same volume.

² Ch. 30.

³ Keith-Falconer ed., p. 161.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

From this practise of combining wise sayings into groups of three sprang a stock type of constructing tales. How this came about may be realized if one observes how effectively stories might be introduced to explain the aphorism. In the example from the book of Proverbs cited above, how easy it would be to illustrate "the way of a man with a maid" by a story. Or, in the case of the three things which disquiet the earth, stories might be told to emphasize the bad influence of a servant who is put on the throne, or of a fool who is filled with meat, or of an odious woman when she is married, or of an handmaid that is heir to her mistress. Even better suited to such a treatment would be the three warnings found in the Indian fables; and the second, regarding putting one's trust in women, has in fact been illustrated by scores of stories, and is an element in the philosophy of Baldwin.

Thus there developed a new type of construction. Sometimes the stories are obviously meant to drive home the lesson taught by the aphorism. The great collections of *exempla* are illustrations of this use, though each *exemplum* commonly deals with one aphorism, not three. In other cases the didactic element is almost lost sight of, and the three counsels or maxims simply supply a convenient frame to which may be attached a series of otherwise unrelated stories. The popularity of this form of construction was immense. The mere bibliography of the subject is formidable, and includes tales in almost every language known. The favorite form of the story is as follows: Three counsels as to one's conduct are obtained by a person either as a wage for work performed or as a purchase; afterwards the life of the fortunate possessor of these maxims is saved by his observance of them in time of peril; or, in case he forgets them, he suffers the loss of property or of life. Without attempting anything like an exhaustive account of this

story-cycle, it will be useful to examine some representative stories, and to try to organize the material under the several forms most frequently met.

TYPICAL FORMS OF CONSTRUCTION.

A study of the stories which belong to this cycle shows that there are five important types. In the first, three rules of life are given, with no stories based upon them and with but little story element, if any, even in the statement. In the second, a king purchases three maxims and his life is saved by observing them. In the third, a poor man, or a youth just leaving home, engages as a servant; at the expiration of his term of service he is given his choice between receiving his pay or in place of it three maxims; he chooses the wise sayings, and afterwards has occasion to be thankful that he did so. In the fourth, the king appears as a wise teacher, who sells or gives three counsels to certain pupils. In the fifth and last, a man who is poor but wise pays for some service done him by giving three advices in place of money.

Type I. Three rules of life are stated; no application made.

This is the primitive form of the cycle. An example has already been cited from the Fables of Bidpai; the teaching is that one should not approach a prince (with presumption), or place confidence concerning important matters in a woman, or take poison in order to test it. Another example, from the same book, is as follows: "It has been said by the wise that a man who follows after the fear of God ought not (1) to withhold questions from ascetics, since they can bring him near to God; nor (2) to withhold from princes anything that may help them to fight against their enemies and bring them

to rest and the peace of their army; nor (3) to withhold from his friend anything that may console his trouble and relieve his distress.”¹ Of the same character is the account of the three things essential to the wise man. “(1) Let him examine what profitable and what harmful things he is doing, so that he may beware of the harmful and pursue the profitable. (2) Let him be watchful so that he may not suffer hurt, and beware lest his good things be snatched from him. (3) Let him discern with the clear eye of the mind what good things he expects to receive, that he be active and eager to get them and afraid of the harmful things lest they touch him.”²

The way in which the development from a mere statement of maxims to a story took place is illustrated by some versions of Bidpai's fables in which it is expressly said that the fables are intended to illustrate the counsels. In one version,³ fourteen maxims are given for the guidance of kings. Among them are several repeatedly met elsewhere, such as, “When you have once acquired what you have diligently sought, preserve it carefully;” “do not be too hasty, but weigh and examine what you plan to do;” “never be disturbed at the accidents of the world.” The fables which follow emphasize the importance of these counsels.

But the most famous example of a story of this type, where there is only the slightest narrative element, with no development of illustrations, is the *exemplum* of the nightingale. There are countless versions of it, in many languages. As good a case as any is that given by Jacques de Vitry.⁴ A man catches a nightingale, which tells him that if he will

¹ P. 164 (Keith-Falconer ed.).

² P. 21 (Keith-Falconer ed.).

³ *The Fables of Pilpay*, London, 1818. The editor's name is not given.

⁴ *The Exempla of Jacques de Vitry*, ed. for F. L. S. by Thomas F. Crane, No. 28.

release her she will teach him wisdom which will prove of great benefit to him. He assents, and after the bird has reached a safe place, she says: "Numquam apprehendere coneris que apprehendere non possis, et nunquam de re perditā doleas, quam recuperare nequeas, et verbo incredibili numquam fidem adhibeas." Whether the peasant immediately grasped the application of these advices to his own release of the bird in hand, is not explained. Neither are we told whether the peasant found any use for the counsels or not, nor what the occasion was. This *exemplum*, therefore, represents a primitive form of the type. The next step was to use the incident as a basis for developing a complex story.¹

It is not essential to the present discussion to make a complete collection of versions of this *exemplum*. It is found in *Barlaam and Josaphat*, under slightly different form, and in *Legenda Aurea*. Lydgate has a version of it, under the title of "The Chorle and the Byrde."² In the *Gesta Romanorum* it is told of the emperor Boemius.³ An Old French version is given in Le Grand's collection under the title "Le Lai de l'Oiselet."⁴ In Petrus Alphonsus, the order of the counsels is different, and the second one reads, "Quod tuum est habe semper, si potes."⁵ This is also the counsel found in "Le Lai l'Oiselet,"—"Ce que tu tiens dans tes mains ne le jette pas à tes pieds." Greek and Latin parallels have also been found.

¹ Here, as elsewhere, I am not speaking of the chronology of these stories as a matter of centuries or years. I am dealing with types, with reference to their primitive or developed forms. Of course a primitive type may be preserved long after the cycle has taken a more complicated form.

² Printed in Ashmole, *Theatrum Chemicum*.

³ Ed. Oesterley, No. 73.

⁴ *Fabliaux ou Contes*, v, 27 ff.

⁵ Ed. Schmidt, No. 23. Schmidt's note (p. 150) is very valuable and contains an extensive bibliography.

Type II. A king purchases three counsels, which are the means at a later time of saving his life.

This is one of the most important forms of the cycle.¹ The purchase of the counsels forms the introduction to the story, and the main interest is centered in the plot made against the king's life and the way in which the three advices deliver him. The most widely known example of this type is found in the *Gesta Romanorum*.² A merchant has for sale "*tres sapientias*," and the emperor purchases them. They are: (1) *Quicquid agas, prudenter agas, et respice finem*. (2) *Numquam viam publicam dimittas propter semitam*. (3) *Numquam hospicium ad manendum de nocte in domo alicuius accipias, ubi dominus domus est senex et uxor iuvenula.*" For these the emperor gives a thousand florins, but they are worth the price, for afterwards on three separate occasions his life is saved by his observance of them.

Somewhat similar is an account in Etienne de Bourbon of a king who pays a great price for the counsel "In

¹ It is impossible to consider all the tales belonging to this and the following types. Some idea of the extent of the cycle may be gained from Oesterley's note in his edition of the *Gesta* (p. 727), where he cites Plutarch, de Garrulitate, 14; P. Alphonsus, 19; Dialog. creaturar, 93; Vincent Bellovac, Spec. mor. 3, 1, 10, p. 907; Bromyard 9, 14; Specul. Exem. 5, 97; Pelbartus, 21; Mart. Polon. ex. 8, N.; Arnoldus de Hollandia, 1, 8, 5, 2; Baldo, 3; Liber Apum, 2, 43, 3; Lucanor, 48; Bibl. des romans, p. 197; Fuggilozio, 158; Libro di nov. 18, p. 41; Boner, 100; H. Sachs, 1, 4, 383; Eying, 2, 51; Forty Viziers, p. 235; Egenolf, 114; Memel, p. 360; Acerra philolog. 4, 39; Abraham a S. Cl. Lauberhütt, 1, 259; Zeitverkürzer, 498; Haupt's Zeitschr. 1, 407; Massmann, Kaiserchr. 3, 74. Other versions are found in Archivio per le Tradizioni Popolari, III, 98; in Mélusine, IV, 166, and in Museon, 1884, pp. 552-560; Straparola, Night 1, Tale 7, is another example. I am indebted to Professor Kittredge for some additional parallels. Dunlop has a brief bibliographical note in Hist. Fic., I, 76. René Basset, in his Contes Populaire Berbères (p. 227) has an excellent bibliography.

² Ed. Oesterley, pp. 431 ff.

omnibus factis tuis considera antequam facias, ad quem finem inde venire valeas.”¹ By following this advice the king’s life is saved in a time of great peril. The resemblance between this advice and the first one in the story from the *Gesta* will be noted. There is an Arabian story in which the same maxim figures: “Let him who begins a thing consider its end.”² This saves the life of the king when a wicked surgeon who has plotted his death comes to bleed him. Both these stories are evidently closely allied to the parable of Kulla Panthaka in Buddhaghosha’s *Parables*, where a youth who had received from his teacher the charm, “Why are you busy? I know what you are about,” sold it to the king for a thousand pieces of gold. The prime minister, meanwhile, had made a plot against the king by which the barber was to murder him. While the king was being shaved, however, he kept repeating these words over and over, all unconsciously, which so terrified the barber that he confessed all.³

Type III. A poor man, or a youth just leaving home engages as a servant; at the end of the term of service he is offered either his wages or three counsels; he chooses the latter, and, in the adventures which follow, these save his life.

¹ No. 81 (ed. Lecoy, p. 77). Cf. also article by Th. de Puymaigre in *Archivio per le Tradizioni Popolari* for 1884; and also Clouston, *Pop. Tales and Fictions*, II, 317.

² Beloe, *Oriental Apologues*, cited by Clouston, *op. cit.*, p. 318. Clouston calls attention to similar stories in the Turkish romance of the Forty Vazirs; in several collections of Italian Tales, and in Gonzenbach’s *Sicilianische Märchen*.

³ Another version of this last story relates that the charm was “Do I not know why you rub your neck against the rock,” which also means, “Do I not know why you whet your razor.” This charm is given the king by the stupid attempts of a favorite but illiterate minister to write a complimentary verse in accordance with a test proposed by jealous companions who thought such a verse would arouse the king’s anger. The *dénouement* is the same in both cases and the story is practically the same as that which illustrates the first maxim in the *Gesta*. (Clouston, *op. cit.*, II, 491.)

Stories belonging to this type are very numerous. A good example is the tale of Ivan, which is a Celtic version, though the type is probably of Eastern origin.¹ Ivan is very poor, so he leaves his wife and travels far toward the East until he reaches a farmer's house; here he engages for three years, his wages to be 3lb. At the end of the year, his master offers him the amount due but proposes that he take a piece of advice instead. To this Ivan consents, though unwillingly; so he is told, "Never leave the old road for the sake of a new one." At the end of the second year, the same scene is enacted, and the counsel Ivan receives is, "Never lodge where an old man is married to a young woman." At the end of the third year the advice is, "Honesty is the best policy." Ivan now returns to his wife, carrying with him as a present from his former master a cake. He meets many adventures on the way, and would have lost his life but for the three counsels he had received, each of which is the basis for a thrilling experience. When he at last reaches home, he finds his three years' wages in his cake.²

Another story of the same type is told of the Baker of Beanly.³ A poor widow's son leaves his mother in order to look for work. He finds a situation, and soon falls in love with his master's daughter; the night of their marriage he leaves her to find a better place. He binds himself to a baker for seven years; at the end of the term the master commends him and promises better pay for another seven years. This term, likewise, is completed, and the baker

¹ Jacobs, *Celtic Fairy Tales*, p. 195 ff.

² Jacobs's note cites *Archæologia Britannia*, 1707, ed. Llyud; *Blackwood's Magazine*, May, 1818; and Lover's tale, *The Three Advices*. He also shows that the tale was popular in Cornwall and Wales.

³ Clouston, W. A., *The Baker of Beanly, Folk Lore*, III, 183 ff. The Gaelic text is printed by Alex. McBain in the *Celtic Magazine*, July, 1887.

renews his offer. At the end of twenty-one years the baker asks him if he prefers the wages or three advices. He chooses the counsels, which are: (1) Keep the proper roundabout road. (2) Do not stay in the house with a young and beautiful wife who has an old, surly husband. (3) Think thrice before you ever lift your hand to strike anyone. The remainder of the tale is of the stock type, telling how each of these counsels saves the life of the hero. The adventures are not the same as those found elsewhere, an admirable proof that the three-counsels type of construction was well-known at the time the tale was put together, and that it was used simply as the framework on which to hang new and really unrelated incidents.

Of the same character is a Mingrelian tale of a poor orphan who in his utmost extremity met a fair stranger who said that if he would bind himself to his service for three years he would receive three counsels of the greatest value.¹ At the end of the first year, the clever man said to the youth, "Whatever thou seest outside thy yard, throw it into thy yard." At the end of the second year, the counsel was, "Lend nothing to anybody unless thou art much pressed to do so." At the end of the last year, when the youth was ready to depart, he was advised, "Tell not thy secret to a woman." A little variation is introduced into the remainder of the tale. The youth observes the first counsel, and meets with good fortune; the second and third he disregards, and disaster is the result. It will be observed how persistent is the construction of these tales by means of the three counsels, and how the main part of each story consists in the account of the perils which the hero avoided if he kept the counsels in mind, while bad fortune was his if he forgot them.

¹ Wardrop, *Georgian Folk-Tales*, p. 110.

The most elaborate tale belonging to this type is *Ruodlieb*, which involves twelve counsels instead of three.¹ Here the hero serves a king, and at the expiration of his term is given the usual choice. He prefers to have the counsels, and receives twelve advices, of which the most interesting are the following: (1) Trust no red-beard. (2) Leave not the highway for the byway. (3) Avoid lodging where there is an old man with a young wife. (4) Never hitch a mare with foal to a harrow, otherwise you may lose the colt. (5) Don't visit a dear friend too often; rarer visits bring higher regard. (6) Don't take even a beautiful *eigenmagd* as a wife; she will prove too proud. (7) Seek a wife only where your mother advises it; when you win her, treat her well, but remain her master; don't trust secrets to her. (8) Keep your anger and delay revenge at least over night. (9) Do not contend with your master. (10) Don't leave the church until mass is all said. The remainder of the story is quite conventional; a series of experiences involving these counsels is found.

Many other examples belonging to this type might be cited. There is a Cornish *märchen*, in which Hans leaves his wife and serves three years; at the end of the time he receives three advices and a cake: (1) Don't leave the old way for the new; (2) Don't lodge where is an old husband with a young wife; (3) Do not strike in anger.² The use of these counsels is conventional. In a West Cornwall tale the same advices are given, together with the counsel: "Never swear to any body or thing seen through a glass."³ The story is also applied to men who come from other countries to England. In one version, a Highlander spends

¹ Ed. F. W. E. Seiler, Halle, 1882.

² Cited by Seiler in his *Ruodlieb*, p. 52.

³ Bottvell, *Traditions and Hearthside Stories of West Cornwall*, 2nd Series, p. 77 ff.

three years thus and is paid in advices of the conventional type.¹ An Irishman has a similar experience, in another tale, but carries away two cakes instead of one.² Sometimes the three years of service become forty, as in a Sicilian tale,³ but the usual three counsels follow. There are Spanish, Italian, and German versions of tales belonging to this type.⁴

Type IV. Three counsels are obtained from a king (a) by purchase; (b) by living for a time under his instruction. In some cases a monk or a friend takes the place of the king.

This type is not so clearly defined as the one just treated. It is the opposite of Type II, where the king is the purchaser. In the stories belonging to this type the king is famed for his wisdom. The story may even be ascribed to Solomon, as in a Jewish version cited by M. Lévi.⁵ Three brothers study with Solomon for three years; then they resolve to go home. The king asks them whether they prefer three hundred pieces of gold or three counsels, and they choose the gold. On the way home, however, they are induced by the youngest brother to return to the king and ask for the counsels instead of the money. This done, they set out once more. The youngest brother, who keeps the maxims in mind, prospers exceedingly; the others disregard them and are killed.

¹ Seiler's *Ruodlieb*, p. 52. The story is in Cuthbert Bede's *The White Wife*, London, 1868, p. 141.

² Also cited by Seiler, who points out Spanish and Italian parallels.

³ Gonzenbach, *Sicilianische Märchen*, II, 133.

⁴ Cf. Mistral, *Lis Iselo d' Or* (Avignon, 1876); Gradi, *La Vigilia di Pasqua di Ceppo*; Trueba, *Cuentos Populares*; *La Enciclopedia* (May, 1879); Jecklin, *Volkstümliches aus Graubünden* (I, 116-118); Zingerle, *Lusernisches Wörterbuch* (p. 69); Hahn, *Contes Populaires Grecs* (p. 222); Lutolf, *Sagen, bräuche und legenden aus Luzern* (p. 85).

⁵ In *Mélusine*, III, 514 ff. Cf. also *Revue des Etudes Juives*, t. XI, pp. 50-74.

More interesting than this is the story told in the Irish Odyssey, *Merugud Uilix Maice Leirtis*.¹ In their wanderings, the heroes landed at a place where they were told that the Judge of Right (Solomon) was lord, and that every man who got instruction from him would reach his native land at once. It was necessary to pay thirty ounces of gold each day for the instruction. To this they agreed, and at the end of the first day were advised, "Do not kill your enemy until you have had three counsels with yourself about it." At the end of the second day, the precept was, "Do not follow a by-path but follow the main road." The third, "Let none leave his place or dwelling, however impatient he may be, till the sun has reached the place where he is now." They were then dismissed with the king's blessing, and were given a box which they were forbidden to open until they got home; this box, of course, contained the ninety ounces of gold they had paid the king.

A Norse variant of this tale has been found.² Haco takes service with the king of Denmark, who instructs him in the arts of the silversmith, of the goldsmith, and finally in architecture. At the end of each year he asks of the king some piece of advice. At the expiration of the three years he had learned, besides the arts he studied, (1) never to trust a little man or a man with red hair; (2) never to leave church, no matter how great the haste, until mass has ended; (3) if angry to say the Lord's prayer three times before attacking one's enemy. The remainder of the story has the conventional adventures, with the great service of the counsels duly emphasized.

A variant of the type is seen in two stories in which some one else is substituted for the king. In one, an

¹ Ed. K. Meyer, from an early 14th century MS.

² Clouston, W. A., in *Folk Lore*, III, 556 ff.

oriental tale, a poor widow's son marries a princess; they live in great poverty because the girl is exiled with her husband. She advises her husband to visit a wise monk and get his counsel. This is done and the youth is given three maxims which afterwards saved his life: (1) She whom one loves the best is the most beautiful; (2) patience leads to safety; (3) there is good in every patient waiting.¹ Another variant is more complicated, and is also oriental.² A youth is about to travel and is given three counsels by a friend. The first one, "Give not thy heart to the love of the world and riches," is illustrated by a story somewhat like that told about Joseph and Potiphar's wife; it is very complex and narrates many adventures. The second advice, "Do not trust implicitly in persons whose character is neither known nor tested," is also followed by a long tale made up of many short ones and covering about twenty-five pages. The third advice, "Be provident and do not despise the counsel of friends," is followed by another set of stories. Altogether, these three advices, with the stories for which they serve as frame, occupy about eighty-five pages. Thus the romance is an admirable example of the use to which this stock type was put after it had been fully developed.³

¹ Seklemain, *The Golden Maiden*, pp. 141 ff.

² Clouston, *Eastern Romances*, pp. 11 ff.

³ In Hazlitt's *Early Popular Poetry*, I, 200 ff., is an interesting account of how a merchant, being away from home on a trading expedition, bought many rich gifts for a courtesan of whom he was enamoured, and at last, thinking of his rather plain and sober-minded wife, purchased as a present for her a "peny worth of witt." An old man sold him this counsel, which was to the effect that if he would return from a journey dressed vilely and apparently ruined, he would learn that which would profit him. He followed this advice. The courtesan spurned him, now that his money was gone, but the faithful wife was true and said that she would go out and work for him. Naturally, he reformed his method of living.

Type V. Counsels are used in place of money in paying for small services.

This type differs from III in that the element of choice is not introduced; the money is not concealed in a cake or a loaf; the person who gives the advices is too poor to make payment in any other way. The type is interesting because it proves that at one time advice had a market value and could be bought and sold like tea or sugar. Very few shoemakers would nowadays accept three pieces of advice in payment for some repairing work; yet there is an oriental story based on this very odd business transaction.¹ A young cobbler mends the shoes of a darivesh and gets in payment three counsels: (1) Set not out on a journey until you have found your fellow traveler; (2) light not in a waterless place; (3) enter great cities when the sun is rising. The cobbler follows these advices, and they save his life. The facts are that in those days, if one offered counsels instead of money it was not safe to refuse, for nobody knew when some dire peril would come upon a man who had just had such an opportunity to get wisdom. Neither history nor literature records the sad fate of those who dared refuse proffered advice. In some cases it was accepted unwillingly, as we have seen. In all recorded cases, however, it was accepted, though sometimes it was straightway forgotten and then swift destruction overtook the careless one.

Evidence of the money value of advice is given by a story of a Brahman whose wife, having been deserted by him, tells him she is in need.² He gives her a paper containing four bits of advice. These she does not need for personal use, so she sells them for a lach of rupees. This

¹ Gibbs, J. W. (tr.), *Hist. of the Forty Vazirs*, No. 18.

² Knowles, *Folk-Tales of Kashmir*, p. 33. A similar tale is in *North Indian Notes and Queries*, III, 327.

is the introduction to a very long tale of how the purchaser of the counsels several times saved his life by following them. The substance of the counsels was : (1) Let one beware of sleeping in a strange place ; (2) a man may test his friends if he is in need, but if he is not in need let not his friends try him ; (3) a married sister will receive a man well or ill according as he comes in state or in poverty ; (4) a man must not depend on others to do his work.

This lengthy classification of the types under which the tales belonging to this cycle may be placed, will be closed by a reference to a humorous form of type V, which tells how an impecunious trickster tried to deceive a porter.¹ The cheat bought a box of glasses and sought a porter to carry it. He offered the servant his choice between the usual fee and three counsels. This was a safe proposition, since, according to the etiquette of such occasions, the porter could do nothing else than to accept the bits of advice. When one-third of the way had been traversed, the porter said that the box was heavy, so he begged for one of the words to inspirit him. The rogue replied, "If any one tells you that slavery is better than freedom, don't believe him." The porter realized that his employer was making game of him but said nothing. When two-thirds the distance had been passed, he asked once more for his word of wisdom, whereupon he was given the advice, "If any one tells you that poverty is better than riches, don't believe him." At the end of the journey he secured the third advice before he set the box down. It was, "If any one tells you that hunger is better than fulness, don't believe him." Whereupon the porter let the box fall, so that all the glass was broken, saying, "If any one tells you that there is one glass in this box not broken, don't believe him."

¹ Steere, *Swahili Tales*, pp. 413-414.

The story last mentioned has a significance deeper than the mere humorous treatment of a common type. It is a prose parody of the story-type; it bears evidence to the extreme frequency with which this form of structure was used. It is important to note that we have in this story-cycle a type of construction as marked and as popular as the type represented by the *Seven Wise Masters* or by the *Decamerone*. Just as the individual stories told in the *Seven Wise Masters* vary in the different versions, while all preserve the same frame, so with the individual stories used in different versions of this cycle.

We have therefore a very large and important class of fictions, apparently oriental in origin but permeating every nation of Europe. In structure, the tale belonging to the cycle consists of an introduction telling how some student or some poor man or youth obtained three counsels. To get these, he had to give up the wages which he had served years to earn; three years in most cases, twenty-one in others, forty in at least one. This stock device serves as an introduction to a series of adventures which befall the hero, generally on his return from the place where he has been bound to service. By the means of these counsels, he is saved from disgrace or death.

One more observation remains before we pass to the next topic: the source of these tales is undoubtedly popular. We are in an atmosphere quite different from that of courtly romance. These are stories born of the people. There are cautions against hasty temper, cautions against the dangers of travel, cynical remarks about women, emphasis on the homely virtues. Before drawing any comparisons between the cycle and the Baldwin episode in the *Avowing* it is necessary to develop this last point a little more fully.

VIRTUES ILLUSTRATED BY THESE TALES.

A little observation will show that the counsels which occur most frequently in the tales examined fall under one or another of five heads. In the first class, counsels which illustrate the virtue of caution, the following examples have been cited in the pages immediately preceding: (1) Before you do anything, consider well the consequences (Etienne de Bourbon; *Gesta Romanorum*; Bidpai's *Fables*; *The White Wife*; Arabian, Spanish, and Italian *märchen*). (2) If you spend a night in a strange place, don't sleep, lest you be slain (Folk Tales of Kashmir). (3) Don't spend the night in a house where there is a beautiful young wife with an old husband (*The White Wife*; *Ruodlieb*; *Baker of Beany*; *Gesta*; *Celtic Folk Lore*; Cornish *märchen*). (4) Keep the proper road, don't leave the highway for the byway (*Beany*; Greek *märchen*; *Gesta*; Irish *Odyssey*; Italian and Cornish *märchen*; *Celtic Folk Lore*). (5) Don't set out until you have a fellow traveler; light not in a waterless place; enter a great city while the sun is rising (*The Forty Vazirs*). (6) Don't trust apparent submission of enemy (Bidpai). (7) Don't trust a red beard (Story of Haco; *Ruodlieb*). (8) Don't trust persons whose character is not known (*East. Romances*). (9) Lend nothing unless compelled (*Georgian Tales*).

In the second class, in which the virtue of controlling the temper is illustrated, we have such counsels as the following: (1) Think thrice before lifting the hand to strike (*Beany*). (2) Don't kill thy enemy until thou has held three counsels with thyself about it (Irish *Od.*). (3) Be mild, and of an affable temper (Bidpai). (4) Keep thy anger and delay revenge over night (*Ruodlieb*; Cornish, Sicilian, Greek *märchen*).

Illustrations of the third class, in which cynical views

about women are expressed, are as follows: (1) Trust nothing to a woman (*Jewish Counsels of Solomon*). (2) If a man has a married sister and visits her in pomp, she will receive him for the sake of what she can gain, but if he comes in poverty she will disown him (*Folk Tales of Kash.*). (3) Tell not thy secret to a woman (*Georgian Tales*). (4) Place no reliance on a woman's love, for it changes on every frivolous fancy (Bidpai). (5) A wise man places no confidence in women on matters secret and terrible (Bidpai).

As to patience, (1) Don't be disturbed at the accidents of the world (Bidpai). (2) Don't weep over that which is lost (*Nightingale*, etc.). (3) Patience leads to safety (*Golden Maiden*). (4) There is good in every patient waiting (*Ibid.*).

Some other virtues, chiefly those pertaining to the simple philosophy of humble lives, are illustrated: Don't contend with thy master (*Ruod.*); honesty is the best policy (Celtic F.); she whom one loves best is most beautiful (*Golden Maiden*); don't leave the church until mass is said (F. L. III: 556; *Haco*; *Ruod.*); don't withhold from thy friend anything that increases his happiness (Bid.); when you have acquired what you have sought, preserve it (Bid.; *Nightingale*, etc.); never decline good counsel and prudence (Bid.); seek not what is below your dignity (Bid., etc.).

RELATION OF THIS CYCLE TO THE BALDWIN EPISODE.

We are now ready to inquire as to the relation between this cycle of stories based on three counsels and the Baldwin episode.

1. Attention has already been called to the fact that the part of the romance dealing with Baldwin's vows is very different from what precedes. There are three vows, not one, as in the case of the others; and this, too, in the face of the fact that only one vow was expected of a knight on the

occasion of such ceremonies. Again, Baldwin's vows necessitate no action on his part.

2. The vows once made, they become practically *geasa* for him. Although he apparently does not make them with any idea that his words will necessitate any particular action on his part, and though he evidently does not know that he is being tested until the king explains the joke, yet he would have suffered disgrace if he had failed to observe them. He was, therefore, compelled to live up to these vows or pay a severe penalty. It is noteworthy, also, that two of his vows are practically identical with two of the four *geasa* which every candidate for Fianship had laid upon him: the vow not to fear death, and the vow pledging hospitality.

3. But all this is the ideal of the story-cycle of the three counsels. There is a marked resemblance between the Celtic *geasa* and the counsels which the poor man received in lieu of a wage, or which the king bought from some merchant. In the case of the counsels, each becomes a maxim governing the life of the recipient. If he keep them, he will prosper; if he fail to keep them, disaster will come upon him; thus they are practically *geasa*.

4. Again, in the story-cycle of the three counsels there is a certain philosophy of life. The counsels, with the stories depending on them, illustrate some of the prevailing ideals of manhood. The fact that in so many cases *caution* was dwelt on as a cardinal virtue speaks of a time when traveling was exceedingly dangerous, and when man could rarely trust his neighbor. The restrictions of a system of caste and the inharmonious relations between masters and servants find a reflection in the oft-repeated emphasis on patience. The same might be said of the virtues of self-control and foresight and those homely virtues so often insisted upon. The view of woman, also, is indicated in some of these tales as clearly as in the fabliaux.

5. The same tendency to illustrate with stories the virtues considered important to any age is shown in mediæval literature generally. The great collections of *exempla* illustrate it. In secular literature, too, an elaborate code was drawn up for the government of lovers. Stories emphasizing such a virtue as patience were eagerly sought by a people whose life at its best was too hard. As to the ideal man, Pertelote says,

“We alle desyren, if it mighte be,
To han housbondes hardy, wyse, and free.”¹

And it is noticeable that in this list of the virtues considered of paramount importance in the ideal husband, two are the subjects of Baldwin's vows. For the knight was assuredly “hardy,” as is shown by his conduct when attacked by Kay and his fellow-conspirators; while that he was “free” is sufficiently attested by the lavish hospitality which he dispensed at his castle. Possibly his views on women were proofs of his wisdom.

6. In the Baldwin episode we find this characteristic method of emphasizing cardinal virtues which was the underlying motive of the cycle of the three counsels, as well as of such mediæval tales as the story of Griselda and her patience. There is a philosophy of life: the ideal knight must be a man above petty jealousies, above the fear of death, above niggardliness. The vows of Baldwin are in reality maxims of life merely cast into the form required by the general character of the piece. One might easily construct a story of the conventional type, thus: A king is approached by a poor merchant, who tells him that he wishes to sell three counsels of great value. After consulting with the ministers, the king decides to pay the price demanded, whereupon he receives the following three advices: “(1) Never, under any

¹ *Nonne Prestes Tale*, ll. 93-94.

circumstances, be jealous of your wife. (2) Do not fear death, even though attacked by many foes. (3) Do not refuse your bounty to any who apply, no matter how unworthy." The remainder of the tale, according to the conventional type, would be taken up with accounts of adventures in which the king was saved from death or disgrace by following the advice contained in the three wise counsels. The author adopted this plan as a frame work. He used illustrative incidents to suit himself. As already noted, different versions of the *Seven Wise Masters* cycle show that among the various nations many different stories have been fitted into this frame. Similarly, in the *Avowing*, three virtues are emphasized, and this introduction prepares the way for the author to tell some favorite stories. He uses the form of vows rather than that of counsels, merely in order to connect this episode with what has preceded.

7. That this episode is tacked on, and bears no organic relation to the preceding incidents in which Arthur and the other knights perform their vows, is abundantly proved (a) by the entirely different nature of the vows; (b) by the fact that these vows not only differ from the vows of Arthur and the other knights but also differ from the vows made in other romances on such occasions; (c) from the fact that it was not at that time good etiquette to make more than one vow, thus there is a deviation from the normal type of avowing; (d) from the fact that this episode is strongly unified.

In the Baldwin episode, therefore, we have the virtual creation of a character. This Baldwin is not the Bawdewyn or the Beduer of the romances; neither is he the Baldwin of the other Northern tales. In the presentation of his story, recourse is had to a very famous device, that of the three counsels. This device is entirely new in the English romances; it springs from the popular literature and not from the court literature of the day. Thus the episode pos-

sesses rare interest for those who wish to study the beginnings of characterization and the reachings toward originality manifested by the connection of conventional types not elsewhere found in conjunction. It will now be our duty to examine in greater detail the three tests to which Baldwin was subjected.¹

THE TESTING OF BALDWIN.

Looked at a little more closely, it will be observed that the Baldwin episode possesses a unity quite unknown in the story cycle of the three maxims. In the popular tales cited above, there was no necessary connection between the virtues which were represented ; there was certainly no connection between the adventures which tested the steadfastness of him who possessed the three counsels. When we turn to the story of Baldwin, however, the conditions are quite different. For one thing, there is evident arrangement towards climax : the second test is more severe than the first, while the last is even more difficult than the second. Moreover, the unconcerned manner which Baldwin displays when confronted with seemingly absolute proofs of his wife's infidelity is so startling that it shocks us. To a modern reader it is inconceivable that any man should act, under such circumstances, as Baldwin is said to have acted.

¹ Of course the making of vows which represent one's ideals of righteous living have been known from Hebrew times down to last New Year's Day. An interesting example is found in Schiefner's *Tibetan Tales* (tr. by W. R. S. Ralston, Boston, 1882, p. 306). A king learns of the prosperity attending those who take the five vows and adopts the same plan. The vows are not to take the life of any living creature ; not to steal the property of others ; not to enter into unlawful unions ; not to lie ; not to drink intoxicating liquors. These five vows the king takes, and his wives, and the princes, ministers, warriors, townspeople, and country folk ; all live in conformity with them. We are also informed that the tributary kings, with their people, did the same.

To review the story briefly at this point, it will be remembered that after Arthur has killed the boar and Kay has been rescued from the inevitable disaster which in the later romances always attends his exploits, the joke-loving king turns his attention to the testing of Baldwin. The vow never to fear death is put to the test by a surprise planned by Kay : Baldwin has no difficulty in putting to flight the six knights who set upon him. Next, Arthur sends his minstrel, under disguise, to Baldwin's castle, where he is to remain forty days and to report if in that time any man go meatless away. The minstrel finds that there is no porter to warn men away ; all is merry and free. When, later, the king expresses surprise, the knight philosopher responds succinctly that God has a good plough. Thus, all unconsciously, Baldwin has met the second test. Next, the king commands the knight to go hunting. Precautions are taken to keep him away all night. Arthur then goes to the room of Baldwin's wife, taking with him a young knight. The king orders the youth to get into the bed, but not, on pain of his life, to touch the lady. The king remains in the room all night, the lady's attendants also being present, and when Baldwin returns, at dawn, he is summoned to the chamber, where Arthur explains that he thought best to keep the lady and her supposed lover in this compromising position until the husband should return. The knight makes no comment. Arthur asks, " Art thou wroth ? " " By no means," responds Baldwin ; " if any man came to her thus, it was at her own will." The king expresses utter amazement, whereupon Baldwin explains by telling a story of five hundred soldiers and three women, the upshot of which is that whether a woman be virtuous or not will be as she pleases. The joke is revealed, and Baldwin then explains why he does not fear death and why he never begrudges meat to any, relating an experience which fits each case.

It is clear that the most interesting problem at this point is as to the significance of the vow against jealousy. The other situations we can readily understand, but not even the fact that the romance may reflect some of those cynical views about women which are to be found in the literature of an age when women and priests were the favorite butts for ridicule in minstrel songs and fabliaux will sufficiently explain the astonishing behavior of Baldwin. The story cycle of *Griselda* may assist us toward a solution.

It will be remembered that *Griselda* is expressly required by her husband to pledge herself never to disobey him in any respect. She thereupon takes what is practically a vow :

“ And heer I swere that never willingly
In werk ne thought I wil yow disobeye,
For to be deed, though me were looth to deye.”¹

The remainder of the story relates how she is put to three tests. At first her infant daughter is taken from her ; she makes no complaint, and is as meekly obedient when, a little later, her husband causes to be carried away her little son. This first test of her faithfulness to her vow having been successfully endured, the husband resolves on a more severe trial. She is told that a younger and fairer woman will be brought to the castle as the new wife, and that she must return to her former conditions of poverty. This trial of her ability to endure the ignominy of being thrust out of her place as wife is withstood as bravely as the former test. The supreme trial comes last : she is commanded to return to her husband's castle, this time in the guise of a servant, and to perform the most menial tasks for her successor, on no higher footing than the crowds of slaves who had once been at her call. Having passed this ordeal

¹ *The Clerkes Tale*, ll. 362-364.

with the same faithfulness to her vow which had characterized her entire life, her husband declares it is enough, reveals his purpose and the tricks which have been performed, and joy reigns supreme.

Now in this story the virtue of patience is emphasized to an extent which to modern readers seems not only revolting but immoral.¹ That even Chaucer felt this exaggeration is shown by one of those famous exclamations which endear him to the modern reader :

“Grisilde is deed, and eek hir pacience.”²

We have precisely the same feeling when we read of Baldwin's behavior when put to the test of his vow against jealousy,—his action is not to be understood when judged by any modern standards. We should expect him to tear the unlucky knight limbmeal, in precisely the manner which more human if more violent men are repeatedly represented to have used in the other stories which, we shall see presently, belong to the cycle of which this is a part. Let us note, now, the correspondence between the tests to which Baldwin was subjected and such stories as that of Griselda, stories in which some cardinal virtue is exalted even to the extent of immorality.

1. It is evident that the supreme characteristic of Baldwin is his self-control. This is the cardinal virtue which includes freedom from fear, freedom from resentment even when grossly imposed upon, freedom from jealousy. It is

¹For this suggestion that the story of Griselda is an illustration of a tendency to carry the praise of a virtue to immoral excess, and that this was a common feature of mediæval literature, I am indebted to a paper read by Professor Kittredge before the Modern Language Conference of Harvard University, in October, 1903. Professor Kittredge did not, however, make any reference to the Baldwin story or to the fact that the story of Griselda may be considered as the story of a vow and its fulfillment.

²*The Clerkes Tale*, l. 1177.

manifested in the nonchalant manner in which he brings about the discomfiture of Kay and his fellows ; it is manifested in his laconic inquiry as to whether they wanted any more ; it is also manifested in his failure to say anything to Arthur about his adventure. Even more pronounced is it in the test of his hospitality, where he is imposed upon most shamelessly. He does not fail in any respect ; this virtue he possesses beyond others ; the king is utterly astonished by what he sees. The tendency to carry the virtue to an immoral excess, so patent in the case of Griselda and her patience, is certainly marked in the test of his power to resist jealousy. When he is confronted with seemingly absolute proofs of his wife's infidelity, only to make no word of complaint, to show no sign of anger,—here we have the virtue of self-control carried to Griselda-like lengths. Thus it may be said that the purpose of the author was to exalt supreme self-control as the cardinal virtue ; to do this he treats the three virtues most certainly proofs of self-control ; as a means of so doing, he chooses the frame made universally popular through the story-cycle of the three counsels.¹

This hypothesis explains the order in which the tests are described in the *Avowing* ; it explains the astounding coolness with which Baldwin receives the news of his wife's apparent infidelity. As to the manner in which the tests were carried out, only the third need detain us long. The test of courage refers to the fundamental virtue of good knighthood : the chief merit of the incident in the *Avowing* consists less in the evidence which it gives of Baldwin's valor than in the

¹ It may not be out of place to note that in less important respects, also, there is a suggestion of the Griselda story in this part of the *Avowing*. In each case, the remainder of the story relates how the steadfastness of the one who has taken the vow is tested ; the tests are arranged in climactic order, the last being exaggerated to an immoral degree ; there are three tests in each case ; the *dénouement* is happy.

raciness with which the account is presented. As to the hospitality test, the elements will be observed to be as follows: (1) The usual limit of three days for the entertainment of a stranger is not observed; (2) in the entire forty days no one who applied, whether prince or beggar, was refused, and no distinction in the class of entertainment was made; (3) in all this time, no matter how severely he was imposed upon, Baldwin showed his self-control by manifesting no resentment.¹ Of particular interest in the fact that Baldwin keeps no porter.²

THE VOW AGAINST JEALOUSY.

Thus Baldwin, all unconsciously, satisfied the requirements which his first two vows placed upon him. If he had failed in any respect, he would have suffered a certain disgrace. Only one thing remained; to test his third vow, Arthur prepared an elaborately diabolical plot, the outline of which has already been given.³ Incidents similar to this

¹ On the importance of hospitality as a chief virtue in the mediæval period, cf. Wright, *Hist. of Domestic Manners and Sentiments in England*, pp. 328, 329; Craigie, *Scandinavian Folklore*, p. 15; Guest, *Mabinogion*, p. 59; *Silva Gadelica*, II, 154, 239; and many others.

On the disgrace involved if one's hospitality was rejected, much interesting material may be found in Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon* (*Harv. Stud. and Notes*), VIII, 210 ff.

On the function and privileges of the minstrels, one may consult Chambers, *Mediæval Stage*, I, *index*; Wright, *op. cit.*, 178 ff. and 333.

² For illustrations of the importance of the porter in the middle ages, see Skene, *Four Anc. Bks.*, I, 261; Guest, *Mabin.*, pp. 20, 220, 243, etc. There are frequent references to the "proud porter" in the ballads, e. g., *King Estmere* (Percy, *Rel.*, ed. 1840, p. 18; Child, II, 54).

³ The Arthur of this incident, it will be noted, is quite a different person from the Arthur of Malory. In the early part of the poem we have simply the brave king of the primitive romances. Here the treatment is more original. The king is jovial, ready to play a practical joke upon a friend, and, as Robson observes, has a shade of cunning. This view of Arthur's

story of Arthur, the knight, and the lady are not uncommon in the romances. Frequently a knight was tested as to his chastity by subjecting him to the seductions of a beautiful woman, as in *Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Ider*, etc. Sometimes the woman played only a passive part, the knight being compelled by her husband to pass the night with her, or to get into her bed while the husband stands by. A case in point is the *Carle of Carelyle*, in which Gawain is compelled to share the bed of the carl's wife.¹ But such stories as these, while involving incidents very similar to the one in the *Avowing*, belong to an entirely different type. Here we have not a test of a knight's faithfulness to his vow of chastity, but a plot designed to make the husband believe his wife unchaste, the lady, nevertheless, being innocent.

THE CYCLE OF "THE WOMAN FALSELY ACCUSED."²

Our investigation of the large number of tales belonging to this cycle will be facilitated if we distinguish two impor-

character is occasionally met elsewhere, though not in the courtly romances. In the *Mule sans Frein*, e. g., when Kay returns in disgrace from the quest so boldly claimed by him, Arthur goes out to meet him and, with a fine show of ceremony, seeks to lead the seneschal to claim the rewarding kiss. Others fall in with the jest, and salute Kay with great reverence; the poor blusterer is speechless for a time, then hurries from the hall in shame.

¹ The test lasts only a few minutes, and the carl is present. Professor Kittredge thinks that in the original version the test was for the entire night and that the husband was not present.

² No complete study of this cycle has yet been published. Professor Child discusses *Sir Aldingar* and its variants, but attempts no history of the plot and does not speak of the wager-group or the oriental versions. The late Gaston Paris (*Romania*, t. 32. pp. 481 ff.) discussed the wager-group, but said nothing of such very representative romances as the *Erl of Tolous*, *Sir Aldingar*, *Octavian*, etc., which are indubitably connected with the cycle we have now under consideration. My indebtedness to the last-named article will be apparent, and is always noted by the citation "Paris," with the page.

tant groups, which agree in that the motive really actuating the accusation is chagrin because of the rejected advances of a gallant. In the first group, however, the accuser pretends to have enjoyed the favors of the lady, presenting as proofs an intimate knowledge of her room and of her person, as well as a jewel or other treasure. In the second, the accuser makes no such boasts, but alleges that the lady has been guilty of sin with another man. In general, the course of the plot is as follows :

A. A woman, either a wife or a maiden sought in marriage by a king or a noble, is as famed for her virtue as for her beauty. His knowledge of her may come from the boasts made by her brother ;¹ or by her husband.² Such an introduction naturally leads to the proposal of the wager and is thus peculiarly characteristic of that group.

B. An attempt is made, without success, on the honor of the heroine. This characteristic belongs to all the tales. At times little is made of it because in the wager group a slight difference in emphasis may serve to obscure it in order to gain interest for the stratagem by which the proofs are to be obtained. In most of the tales belonging to the group examined by M. Paris, in his article "Le Cycle de la Gageure," the attempt is inspired not merely by passion but by the gambling instinct. If one turn from this group to such romances as the *Erl of Tolous*, *Aldingar*, *Oliva*, *Gaudine*, etc., the emphasis upon the accuser's passion for the lady is more noticeable. In every case the attempt is made and is, of

¹ *Guillaume de Nevers* ; *Guillaume de Dole* ; *Nouvelle de Sens*, *Eufemia*, etc. (Paris, pp. 487-491.) In the *Erl of Tolous*, the hero asks his captive to describe the wife of the emperor to whom the captive is subject ; smitten with love for her, the earl departs forthwith to seek her favor.

² *Cymbeline*, with the tales closely connected in plot, such as the French miracle play ; *Roman de Violette* ; *Comte de Poitiers* ; fishwife's tale in *Westward for Smelts*.

course, indignantly repelled. The next thought of the rejected gallant is of revenge.

C. In the tales belonging to the wager type the idea of revenge is more or less obscured by the desire of the repulsed suitor to get more tangible evidence to use in proof of his accusation. This may be considered a deviation from the type, due to the influence of the wager *motif*. It is noticeable that of the many tales cited by M. Paris, the great majority are Italian and are of no very great age. On the other hand, the form in which the suitor's passion turns to bitter hate, a hate which he strives to satisfy by contriving that the lady shall be found by her husband in a compromising position, is frequent in oriental versions of undoubted age. It is probable that the wager *motif* was a later development of an old and very popular type which is best preserved in such romances as the *Erl of Tolous*, *Aldingar*, etc.

D. Of the three means by which evidence is secured against the woman, (1) information gained from a maid or a friend; (2) concealment of accuser in the lady's chamber; (3) placing another man in her bed; the last is more primitive and marks group II., while the first two especially characterize the wager type, and mark group I.

Since our present inquiry is mainly concerned with group II., marked by the strange bedfellow, the treatment of the first two methods may be somewhat summary.

1. M. Paris cites a number of tales in which the gallant does not even see the woman against whom he makes an accusation.¹ By bribing some one, he secures a minute description, noting some mark on her body, and also secures a jewel or other token.

2. In some cases the accuser contrives that he be concealed in the chamber, where he makes careful note of the

¹ Pp. 487-498.

room and of the lady's person, and carries away with him a jewel or a crucifix. This is the situation in *Cymbeline*, and in a large number of other cases.¹

It will be observed that this device of concealment in the chamber is similar to the third method in that it involves the actual presence of a supposed lover in the woman's room. In *Cymbeline*, Iachimo induces Imogen to assume charge of a chest presumably containing costly plate. The same situation obtains in the *Decamerone*. M. Paris notes an anonymous Italian novel contained in a fourteenth century manuscript,² and also a German version of the same story first printed in 1489 at Nuremberg.³ In two of these versions (*Decamerone* and the German tale) the accuser remains three nights in the chest before he observes anything useful as evidence; in both these versions, also, the lady does not sleep alone, but with a servant or a little girl. Another German tale, *Der Pfiffigste*, contains a similar incident; the chest is taken into the room by a servant on the plea that it contains *économies*; ⁴ the situation is the same in a tale "The Chest" printed by Campbell in his *Tales of the West Highlands*.⁵ In all these cases it will be observed that (1) the man is actually present in the chamber; (2) he proves his knowledge of the room and of the lady's person; (3) this is counted sufficient proof by the husband.

¹ The important element is the description of a mark on the woman's person. There is a curious story in Schiefner's *Tibetan Tales* (tr. Ralston, p. 230 ff), in which, it should be noted, the woman actually loves and is not falsely accused. Súsroni, the beautiful wife of King Brahmadata, is accused of improper behavior with a young lute player, Asuga by name. The king summons Asuga and says, "If it be said that thou hast looked in sinful fashion on my dear Súsroni say then what marks her body bears." With astonishing promptness, Asuga replies: "On her thigh is the svastika. Her breast is spiral; over her spread wreaths of Timira blossoms." In anger the king gives the woman to her lover and both are banished.

² P. 500.

³ P. 501.

⁴ Paris, p. 518.

⁵ II, 1 ff; cited by Paris, p. 519.

3. We now come to the very large class of fictions in which a man is actually found in the woman's bed. This strange bedfellow is (a) a leper, cripple, or dwarf; (b) a "kitchen knave;" (c) a young knight. The order of development from (a) to (c) is probably chronological.

At first thought, it would seem that the choice of some repulsive person as the alleged object of the wife's affections would either defeat its own end or would indicate that the rejected suitor, in his hatred, desired to fix on the woman not only the sin of adultery but the added disgrace of an unnatural affection for a loathsome leper or a hideously deformed dwarf. In the later tales, no doubt, the latter motive crept in; in the original versions, however, no surprise or repulsion was felt by those who listened. That women in oriental tales are frequently represented as loving such creatures a few examples will prove.

The most interesting of these is the famous story of Kanakaratha.¹ A prince named Kanakaratha lived in a city in Bharata. "In him abode these virtues: he was munificent, simple, the essence of courtesy, handsome, and able to assume what shape he pleased." He went to another land to find out if it was true, as a song said, that everywhere the enjoyer enjoys. To do away with any fortuitous advantages, he assumed a very hideous shape, that of a deformed man with both eyes streaming, with nose and lips gone. The king of the country, Támrachúda, was looking at the beauty of the city from his seven-storied palace, and was puffed up with importance. He said, "You courtiers, by whose favor do you enjoy such a fortune of rule?" They said, servilely, "King, all this springs from your favor." Then the princess, Madanamanjarí, laughed a little, after which she became silent. The king asked why, and she said, "My

¹ Tawney, *The Kathákoca*, pp. 184-191.

father, these servants of yours said what is not true ; for that reason I laughed." Again he asked why, and was told, "Every man fares according to his own actions." When the king heard this, he flew into a passion and said, "Come ! come ! bring some poor leper, afflicted with disease, and very wretched, as a fit bridegroom for my daughter, in order that she may be given to him, so that she may reap the fruit of her own actions." So they searched everywhere for such a man, and soon found the prince who had assumed the loathly form. The leper was dragged to the king, protesting all the way that it was not proper for a crow to marry a female swan. The irate father wedded the two, however, and dismissed them.¹ We are told that Madanamanjarī "bowed before the feet of her father and mother, and, with her lotus-like face full of joy, went out of the palace." When they were walking together, her husband fell in the main street and could not rise, whereupon the princess begged him not to be unhappy but to get upon her back and let her carry him. A straw hut was built for them by the king's servants, and in this they lived. The leper tested his wife in every way ; he described the loathsome disease that would come upon her, and advised her to seek the protection of her mother. She refused this, saying, "Women born in a good family do not do such things, even when the world is coming to an end. . . . To excellent women husbands are deities." Thus the husband was convinced of her worth ; and the Griselda-like story ends with accounts of palaces of pure gold forty stories high, with the leper transformed into a splendid monarch who receives the homage of his father-in-law.²

¹ The curious similarity between this situation and the story of Cordelia and Lear is suggested by Tawney, *op. cit.*, p. 485, note.

² Other stories of the love of women for a leprous or deformed person are frequently met. One is cited by Dunlop (*Hist. Fiction*, II, 39 ; *Les Trois Bossus*) and tells of a wife and her humpbacked husband. It is true that

There are some indications that for a leper to occupy the bed of a married woman was thought in mediæval times to presage a miracle.¹ Sir Aldingar induces the leazar to get into the queen's bed on the promise that by his doing so a miracle would be wrought. The fact that this seems to have been considered by the leper a sufficient excuse for his action indicates that such a belief was well-known. This opinion is strengthened by an *exemplum* of Jacques de Vitry.² A noble lady whose husband loathed lepers and would not permit them in his house, received one in his absence and had him placed in her bed. The husband returned suddenly, but when he entered the chamber, he found only a sweet odor. The wife, who had feared the leper's death rather than her own at the hands of the angry husband, confessed the truth. The husband was converted and henceforth lived as exem-

she married him because he had money, but when three other humpbacks come to the castle they are royally entertained by the lady. In Schiefner's *Tibetan Tales* (tr. Ralston, p. 292) is the story of a woman who loves a cripple with neither hands nor feet, and who kills her husband (as she supposes), in order to enjoy her lover. She carries the cripple on her back, begging food from place to place. In the *Panchatantra* (IV, 5) is an account of a woman's love for a cripple who had a beautiful voice. Although her husband had recently given half his life to bring her back from the dead, she deprived him of even the small part of his existence remaining to him by pushing him into a well and setting out with her deformed lover. Other similar tales may be found in Jacobs' *Hindoo Tales*, p. 261, and in Ralston's tr. of *Tibetan Tales*, intro., p. 62. See also Kittredge, *Arthur and Gorlagon*, p. 188, and note.

¹ In the romance of *Nuller et Amys* (summarized in Dunlop, ed. Wilson, I, 317 ff.) is an incident relating how Amys, being smitten with leprosy was driven from his own castle by his wife, "who appears to have been ignorant of the value of a husband of this description." In a note to p. 320 it is said, "Contrary to modern medical opinion, lepers were in the Middle Ages popularly credited with great sexual vigor. Women who were willing to do so were permitted to marry lepers by the Gregorian Decretals."

² No. xcv. See notes (ed. Crane) p. 174 for bib. The *exemplum* occurs in several collections.

plary a religious life as his wife. The action of the wife in causing the leper to be put in her bed is puzzling unless it be interpreted as indicating, in the original form of the story at least, a belief on her part that by so doing a miracle would be wrought.

Two points seem made clear by the investigation of the leper-type just concluded : (1) the introduction of this element proves the incident to be of great age and hints at an oriental origin ; (2) in early forms of the story the placing of a leper or deformed person in a lady's bed in the effort to convict her of sin, did not necessarily indicate any marked addition to the disgrace. This also helps to explain why in so many later tales the loathly bedfellow was introduced. In some versions, as in the *Erl of Tolous* and the *Avowing*, a young knight is the instrument.

It remains only to note some important mediæval romances in which the strange bedfellow is found. In *Sir Aldingar*, a leper is put in the queen's bed ; the same conditions obtain in numerous variants of the tale, as we shall find later. In *Oliva*, a black beggar ; in numerous Charlemagne romances a leper, beggar, or other mis-shapen person ; in *Octavian*, a kitchen knave with a loathly face ; in *Gaudine*, a dwarf ; in the *Erl of Tolous* and the *Avowing*, a young knight.

E. Only a few words need be said on the bringing of the accusation before the husband. In romances belonging to group I. the accuser merely displays a knowledge of the lady's person and of her room. In group II. the husband is brought to the chamber and is allowed to look upon his wife in the embraces of a deformed or diseased man, a knave, or a young knight. It is to this group that the *Avowing* belongs. At times the incident is very badly muddled. In a group of Northern poems shortly to be examined, no other proof is given than the assertion of a steward that

the wife has mis-behaved. Sometimes the steward swears that he has seen a man lying with the queen and has slain the traitor.¹ The husband at times does not wait for proof, as in the ballad of the "Emperour and the Childe,"² in which a Greek emperor marries a French princess and lives happily with her until a Bishop tries to seduce the wife. He is denied with scornful words, and the Bishop, whose passion has turned to anger, denounces her to the emperor. He says he can prove that she has been unfaithful, but the monarch does not wait for proofs; he banishes her at once. The original probably contained the usual account of the securing of proof.

F. This topic might more exactly be divided into two: the punishment of the woman, and the vindication. This will be done in the examination of the group of representative romances soon to engage our attention. For the present it is sufficient to map out the subject in broad outlines. The first type of vindication is characteristic of those tales belonging to group I. in which the accuser does not in reality see the woman. Several such tales have already been cited; the accuser rests his charge on the minute description of the lady which he has gained from a corrupted servant. Often the accused woman causes some property belonging to her to be placed in the rooms of the man who charges her with wrong-doing. She thereupon lodges against him a counter charge of robbery, appearing to him in the trial for the first time, he swears he never saw her before, thus forcing a confession of his false charge. Examples are the story of Guillaume de Nevers;³ *Guillaume de Dole*;⁴ *Nouvelle de Sens*;⁵ *Eufemia*;⁶ *Justa Victoria*;⁷

¹ *Sir Triamour*.

² Percy MSS., II, 393 ff.

³ *Manuscrit de Tours*, 468, 33, cited by Paris, p. 487.

⁴ Ed. Servois; cited by Paris, p. 487.

⁵ Paris, p. 490.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 490-491.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 492.

La Pianella; ¹ *Les deux enfants du prince de Monteleone*; ² with some additional Italian versions cited by M. Paris, ³ and the German version, already referred to, in Simrock's *Deutsche Märchen*. It will be noted that the usual situation in romances of this group is that the lady is unmarried and is thus not subject to punishment; she sets out for the court where dwells the man who has boasted of having seduced her, and puts him to confusion in the manner described.

In a second group, the lady is a wife and is either banished or sentenced to death by her husband. If the latter punishment is ordered, the servant charged with her execution permits her to go free, and tells his lord that he has exposed her body to the wild beasts of the forest. She often assumes male attire, and is finally in a position where she can force a confession from the man who wrongfully charged her with crime. This is the situation in *Cymbeline* and in the group of tales, already cited, which have plots closely similar to it. ⁴ The point worth noting here is the period of exile in which the woman is forced to wear a man's clothes. M. Paris cites a number of tales, in addition to the *Cymbeline* group, in which the conditions are similar. ⁵ The English romances of *Triamour*, *Octavian*, and the *Erl of Tolous* should also be noted.

The third group is sharply differentiated from the two just considered by two characteristics: (1) The tales belonging to it are practically all Northern, ⁶ while those of the first two groups are practically all French and Italian; (2) the essential element is the trial by combat, rarely the ordeal. A typical example is the ballad of *Sir Aldingar*, ⁷ in which

¹ *Raccolta di novelle del P. Atanasio da Verrocchio*, Paris, p. 494.

² Gonzenbach, op. cit., I, 70; Paris, p. 495.

³ Pp. 496-8.

⁴ The exile and return formula.

⁵ Pp. 515 ff.

⁶ In *La Royale Couronne des Roys d'Arles*, the accuser proclaims himself ready to support his charge by combat.

⁷ Child, II, 33 ff. (No. 59).

the lady claims the right of trial by battle and is vindicated. Professor Child cites eleven Scandinavian versions, in all of which the trial by combat is found. In the romance of *Oliva*, the queen asks to be tried by ordeal, to be put naked into a copper vessel over a hot fire, or thrown from a high tower upon sword and spear points, or taken in a boat out of sight of land.¹ The *Erl of Tolous* makes use of the same method; this is a composite tale, however, introducing the southern elements of the strange bedfellow and the period of banishment.

IMPORTANT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CYCLE.

We have now to consider a group of romances whose relation to the subject of our inquiry is very important. All of them show the general characteristics of the cycle; all are related in important respects; several are the chief representatives of groups in which a large number of closely related tales are found.

1. The *Erl of Tolous* (T.) runs as follows: The earl asks his prisoner, a knight in the service of an emperor, about the emperor's wife; her beauty is praised; the earl promises to free his prisoner if the knight will lead him to see her. The earl visits the lady and tries to win her love; he is repulsed, though with courtesy; she forgives him readily and they part as friends. There is a break in the story at this point, the earl dropping out for a time. Two knights appear on the scene; both fall in love with the lady; one makes an attempt upon her and is scornfully repulsed. The knight, terrified by her anger, protests that his purpose was merely to prove her virtue, whereupon he is at once forgiven. The attempt of the second is not more successful; as a

¹ Summarized by Child, II, 39.

result, they plot the lady's ruin. A young knight, carver to the lady, is induced to creep behind the curtain in her chamber. By "the game" he is first to cast off his clothing; he is not to move until called. Suspecting nothing, the lady enters and retires. After a little time the knights raise an alarm, and, with others, rush into the room. The innocent knight is promptly killed; the lady is seized and imprisoned. Next morning, the emperor returns; he is given seemingly absolute proofs of her guilt; she is banished. After many perils, the lady is reunited to her husband, through the instrumentality of the Earl of Tolouse, who vindicates her as her champion in a trial by combat.¹

2. In *Sir Aldingar*² (Al.) we have a ballad which Professor Child considered very old, although it was written down about the middle of the seventeenth century. Sir Aldingar is the steward of King Henry; he falls in love with the queen and seeks her favors; she repulses him with bitter words. In order to get revenge, he places a lazar in her bed, promising the fellow that a miracle will be wrought. He then summons the king, who sentences both the queen and the lazar to death. But the queen sees the hand of Aldingar in all this (she has been warned by a dream), and claims the right of trial by battle. She is vindicated, and the story ends happily. This tale has many variants, especially in Scandinavian (eleven versions) and Scotch. None of these versions, however, has the strange bedfellow incident; the steward, when repulsed, merely accuses the lady of having misbehaved with a bishop or with some other person. The trial by combat is preserved in all cases.

3. A miracle play, *Miracle de la Marquise de Gaudine*

¹ The striking parallel between this romance and *Cymbeline* is apparent, and has not, to my knowledge, been pointed out.

² Child, II, 33 ff.

has a story very similar to the type.¹ By reason of enmity caused by rejected love, a dwarf is hidden by the suitor in the lady's chamber. The knights rush in and kill him, as in the *Erl of Tolous*, and then accuse the lady to her husband.

4. The story of *Oliva*² is even more striking in its correspondence to the type. Oliva is the sister of Charlemagne and is Hugo's wife. The husband goes on a hunt, leaving the wife in charge of a steward named Milon. This steward approaches the lady with the usual proposal; is spurned; and goes home in chagrin. He soon reappears, bearing a drink; telling the queen his object had merely been to test her virtue, he proposes that she signify her forgiveness by drinking with him. To this the amiable lady readily assents; the cup has been drugged; the lady is soon unconscious. The steward now gives the same drink to a black beggar, and puts both in the lady's bed with arms about each other's necks. The king returns, and is conducted by the steward to the chamber. In a rage, he kills the beggar and would have dispatched the queen but for the fact that every drop of blood which falls from the beggar turns into a burning candle. The queen awakes; is confronted with the charge; asks for the ordeal. She is fully vindicated, and is reunited to her husband. This romance combines the northern feature of the trial with the southern and oriental strange bedfellow type.³ Other versions of the tale are found: a Spanish prose romance of Oliva and a *chanson de geste* of *Doon l'Aleman*.⁴ In these versions a youth and not a leper or beggar is put into the bed; the trial by ordeal is the means of vindication. Another version attaches the

¹ Ed. G. Paris, in *Miracles de Notre Dame*, II, 121 ff.

² Summarized by Child, II, 39.

³ Child (p. 39) says it is tr. from an English copy brought home by a Norseman resident in Scotland in 1287.

⁴ Child, p. 40.

tale to Sibilla, wife of Charlemagne, who was repudiated by her husband because an ugly dwarf was found in her bed. Professor Child cites many other versions in Spanish, Dutch, French, German, in almost all of which the ugly dwarf is introduced. It is noticeable how completely this element disappears in the northern versions: as an illustration, the tale of Sisibe is interesting; the more so because the heroine is the daughter of a Spanish queen.¹ In this story, the plot is very similar to the type, with the exception that no dwarf or knight appears. When the king returns, the queen's accusers swear that she has been entertaining a handsome thrall; this thrall evidently disappeared somewhere on the journey from a southern original to a northern home.

5. *Sir Triamour* (Tr.), an English romance, is of this type also; the queen is left in the steward's care during the husband's absence on a crusade. When repulsed, the steward maintains that he has only been testing her. On the return of the king, he claims to have seen a man lying with the queen and to have slain the traitor. The queen is banished. It is evident that in some process of making over, *Sir Triamour* lost the important incident of the strange bedfellow; all that remains is the mere assertion of the steward.

6. The romance of *Octavian*² (O.) differs from all others belonging to the type in that the actuating motive is not hatred caused by rejected love, but the envy of the mother-in-law. The empress Florence gives birth to twin sons; the mother of the emperor insists that this is a proof of the wife's infidelity; she soon prefers the charge of having seen the new wife with a lover, and offers to prove this to the husband's satisfaction. Upon being challenged to do so she goes to a boy with a loathly face, who is called also a

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

² *Octavian Imperator*, Weber, III, 161 ff.

“cokes knave,” and tells him that he must sleep with queen Florence, by her son’s order, and that he will be advanced. The knave is expressly ordered not to touch the lady, though this precaution was dictated solely by the danger which would result to her plan if the lady should awake. The king is summoned to the chamber; he is convinced of the wife’s guilt and cuts off the lad’s head, throwing it to her as a plaything: the lady is banished. After many trials the conventional ending makes everyone happy except the mother-in-law.

7. In the *Avowing* (A.) the incident is torn from the usual setting and is used for humorous effect. Nevertheless we have in it a close following of the customary program; the only differences are in the motive of the charge and in the *dénouement*. The situation, stripped of the humorous element, is as follows: Arthur, in whose care Baldwin’s wife is left, for some reason plots her ruin. The husband is on a hunting expedition; shortly before his expected return, Arthur compels a youth to get into bed with the lady; he keeps them in this compromising position all night. Early the next morning, Baldwin returns; he is summoned to his wife’s chamber, and there is confronted by the sight of another man in her bed. Here the usual order abruptly changes, the joke is explained, and the husband and wife are reunited.

8. As to *Cymbeline* (C.), an outline of the story will show how nearly it corresponds to the usual type; Iachimo hears the husband of Imogen boasting her beauty and virtue, and places a wager that he will win her favors. He goes to the lady’s home, makes the customary proposal, and is scornfully repulsed. He is terrified by the lady’s threats to summon help, and stammers that his whole aim was but to test her. She forgives him with the usual surprising haste; meanwhile he plots her ruin. Having won the lady’s consent to take

into her room for safe keeping a chest which he alleges contains silver plate, he conceals himself in this chest, and is thus enabled to spend a night in her room. Here he observes the furnishings, takes some jewels, and notes a mole on the lady's breast. Armed with these proofs, he confronts the husband, who readily believes him, and sends orders that the lady be put to death. This punishment becomes practically one of banishment, because the servant charged with her execution permits her to escape. After many perils, she is re-united to her husband, her innocence having been proved.

With these eight important representatives of the cycle in mind, a comparative study of the plot may be made: (1) A lady famous for her beauty and virtue is highly praised in the hearing of a man who lives far from her and has never seen her (T. C.); or, in some versions, the lady's beauty inspires with passion the steward or some knight in whose care she is placed (A. G. Ol. Tr.); in one version the mother-in-law is the hostile agent (O.). (2) The husband is away, on a hunt (A. Ol.); on a crusade (Tr.); on a military expedition (T.); traveling (C.) (3) An effort is made by the suitor to win the lady's favor but is scornfully repulsed (T. Al. G. Ol. Tr. O. C.). (4) In his terror and confusion, the suitor maintains that his sole object was to test the lady's faithfulness to her husband (T. Ol. Tr. C.). (5) He immediately plots the ruin of the woman, either by himself spending the night in her room (C.); or by putting another man in her bed, a loathly leper or knave (T. Al. G. Ol. O.), or a young knight (A.; variations of Ol.). (6) The husband is convinced of his wife's guilt, either by the accuser's proofs that he has spent the night in her room (C.); or by seeing the woman in a compromising position (A. Al. Ol. O.); or by the fact that the supposed paramour, having been discovered by the people of the household, has been slain by them (T. G.). (7) The

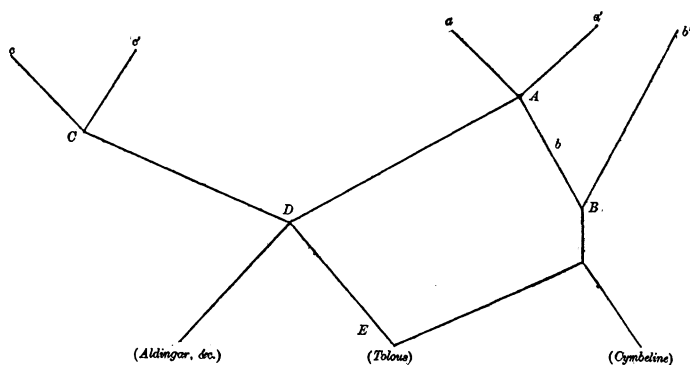
woman is sentenced to death or banishment (T. Al. G. Ol. Tr. O. C.); she suffers many perils and long exile, but is vindicated, either by trial by battle or ordeal (Al. G. T. Ol.), or by confession of the fraud by the accuser (A. C.).

HISTORY OF THE PLOT.

To attempt an elaborate history of the plot which has been considered in the pages immediately preceding would be a task entirely too ambitious for the present work. The immense mass of literature involved, and the large number of variations which different groups show within themselves would make the construction of such a history a very difficult as well as an extremely dangerous task. Even of the group of ballads to which *Sir Aldingar* belongs, the late Professor Child observed, "There is no footing firmer than air for him who would essay to trace the order of the development."¹ But without pressing our inquiry into the ramifications of the plot too far, it may perhaps be safe to call attention to five types which appear to be quite definitely marked and to suggest the possible relations between them. It should be understood that no attempt is made to ascertain the sources, say, of the *Erl of Tolous* or of *Sir Aldingar*. Each of these tales is representative of a large number of others, and may therefore be considered typical. Each contains elements certainly related to elements found in the other romances considered as types, while each also contains elements peculiar to the group, or type, to which it belongs. We may, therefore, classify the great mass of material belonging to the cycle, under such heads as the *Cymbeline* type, the *Erl of Tolous* type, the *Aldingar* type, etc., and may use them for constructing a tentative history of the plot.

¹ *Op. cit.*, II, 43.

A. *The Oriental Type.* The essential element seems to be the charge that a woman is guilty of sin with a leper or some other loathly person. Instances have already been cited to show that lovers of this type were common in the orient, and the evidence is that even high-born women did not disdain persons so afflicted. There were two elements in the construction of what may be called the oriental type



of the plot: (a) A large number of stories in which women actually loved cripples, lepers, and other repulsive persons; (a') the existence of stories in which a trusted servant, having vainly attempted to seduce his master's wife, preferred a false charge against her.¹ Just when these elements were united into one story is of course impossible to say. It seems safe to suppose that this form of the story is very old, and that it antedates such types as *Cymbeline* represents.

B. *The Wager Type.* At some point in the development between type A. and the sources of *Cymbeline*, certain changes took place in the plot. The article by M. Paris, already so frequently referred to, seems to show that the

¹ For an example of (2) without (1) cf. Bidpai's *Fables*, ed. Keith-Falconer, p. 104 ff. An example of (1) without (2) was cited just above.

wager cycle is essentially an Italian and French development. The important characteristics of the type are: (1) the beauty and virtue of a woman is the subject of wide report; (2) inspired by lust, or envy, or malice toward a brother of the woman, a libertine wagers that he will seduce her; (3) he attempts this and fails; (4) he plots her ruin, usually by spending a night in her room and noting certain points to be used as evidence; (5) he is finally put to confusion and the woman is vindicated. It will be seen that the most important difference between this type and A. is the introduction of the wager. But there is a group of stories, to which M. Paris refers in the first division of his analysis, in which (1) a wager is made; (2) the proposal is received by the woman with feigned compliance; (3) the suitor passes a night, as he supposes, with her, and takes as proof a finger; (4) but it transpires that the woman has substituted a servant for herself, so that in reality she is guiltless. M. Paris recognized that this is a primitive form of the story, but he did not observe that the plot against the woman, so prominent a feature in the great majority of the tales belonging to the cycle, is entirely lacking. No motive for such a plot is given, because the woman feigns submission, and the gallant supposes that his wager is easily won.

The conclusion which it seems safe to make at this point is that two types of tales are united to form the wager type. Both are oriental in origin; stories involving a mutilation of the woman by the paramour are not infrequent. In the first class, which we may call *b*. and note as a development from A., the beauty and virtue of a woman prompts an attempt upon her honor; the proposal is scorned; a plot is laid to convict her of sin with a porter, a leper, a cripple, etc. In the second, *b'*., there is a wager that a certain woman can be seduced; the attempt is made; the woman feigns com-

pliance but in reality substitutes a servant ; there is no plot or stratagem. These two elements, united, form B. This type, as already noted, became extremely popular in Italy and in France. The numerous examples cited by M. Paris prove how widely known such tales were, and their popularity continued until the final form was stamped upon the story by Shakspeare. At the same time, the contention that these stories form not an independent cycle, as M. Paris seemed to suggest, but a very important branch of the great cycle of the woman falsely accused, seems justified by the fact that the wager story as it appears in the *Decamerone*, in *Cymbeline*, etc., is developed from two elements (1) the primitive wager story in which the woman feigns compliance and no other stratagem to convict her of crime is necessary ; and (2) the story of the hate aroused by a woman's refusal to yield to a suitor, with the plot to convince her husband that she entertains a guilty love for a paramour.

The changes made necessary by the fusing of these two elements are easily explained, since they are due to the modification of *b.* by the fusing of *b'.* with it. There still remain, from *b.*, the repulse of the suitor ; his chagrin ; and the stratagem by which a supposed paramour spends the night in her chamber. But he cannot rest merely with bringing to her husband apparent proofs of her infidelity ; her guilt must be due to her yielding to him, or he must lose his wager. The putting of a leper or a cripple in her bed and summoning the husband, the most important element in *b.*, is accordingly modified by the use of the stratagem by which the rejected suitor himself passes the night in her room and is able to prove this to the husband's satisfaction.

C. *The Northern Type.* It is not to be supposed that all false charges lodged against women of high position are of oriental origin. There can be no doubt that such stories

spring from no single source, unless that source be the wickedness of some human hearts no matter what the age or nation. Such stories were no doubt common in the Northern countries from the earliest times. Another element, which seems to me to be more certainly Northern in origin, is the proving of innocence, in tales of this character, by the *judicium dei*. The trial by battle was, as is well known, especially popular among the Germanic nations. Thus two elements, which we may call *c.* and *c'*. united to form a type certainly Germanic and apparently Northern: the false charge (not necessarily of infidelity, but usually so) directed against a woman; and the proving of innocence by *judicium dei*. The result of this union gave a story in which a woman incurs the displeasure of some one high in the husband's favor; is charged by him with infidelity or with some serious crime; protests her innocence, and is subjected to the ordeal or to the trial by battle. Another element almost invariably enters: that of the diminutive champion and the magic sword.¹

There is a group of Scandinavian ballads which Mr. Child has called cousin to the English *Sir Aldingar*. The subject is *Ravengaard og Memering*, and the story most commonly told is of the hatred conceived for Gunild, wife of king Henry, by Ravengaard, (or Ravnli).² Being repulsed, he plots her ruin, charging her with infidelity with the archbishop. It will be noted that no proof is given or required. The lady protests her innocence, and a trial by battle is decided upon; but although she goes before the nobles with head and feet bare, none ventures to defend her cause save Memering, who is the smallest of men and has least enjoyed the favor of the king. By the aid of the magic sword Adel-

¹ Professor Child considered the magic sword a distinctly Northern element (*op. cit.*, II, 35).

² Summarized by Child from Gruntvig.

ring, the lady's champion overthrows the false steward, and, in most versions, claims the lady as a reward.¹ This represents the story as told in a Danish ballad preserved in a sixteenth century manuscript. There is no attempt at seduction, but Ravengaard merely asks Gunild for the magic sword Adelring, saying that if she refuses he will tell a great lie about her. This version appears to be nearer the original; it is constructed as follows: (1) hatred for a woman on the part of a high officer; (2) his threat to tell a great lie; (3) the false charge of infidelity, supported only by his own testimony; (4) the trial by battle, in which a diminutive champion wins the victory, by the aid of a magic sword. The substitution, in place of the demand for a sword, of the *motif* of a malice aroused because Gunild refuses to give her favors to Ravnllil (Ravengaard), which is found in all the other versions, is pretty certainly a later development, and it may be that this is an element introduced from the Southern group with which we have been dealing.

However this may be, it seems safe to assume two parallel groups, both very old, which represent early forms of the cycle which we are investigating. The essential elements of A., as we have seen, are (1) the passion of a seneschal or steward for his lord's wife; and his repulse by her; (2) the attempt to fasten a charge of infidelity upon her, by placing in her bed a leper or other loathsome person. In C. we find as the chief characteristics, (1) the hatred of a steward for his lord's wife, a hatred probably not inspired, in the earliest forms, by his failure to seduce her, though it is not safe to be dogmatic on this point; (2) the trial by combat or by ordeal as a means for clearing the lady; (3) the appearance

¹ Of course there are a few variations, in the eleven versions, such as the substitution (rare) of ordeal for battle. These are noted by Child, pp. 35-37. Ravengaard is the name of the steward in the sixteenth century Danish poem; Ravnllil in the other seven.

of a diminutive champion armed with a magic sword. The difference in the mode of vindication should be carefully noted: in A., there is usually a period of exile in which the lady suffers many perils and is finally re-united to her husband; in C., there is the *judicium dei*, while the lady usually becomes the property of her champion, not only as a reward for his prowess, but as a just punishment to a husband entirely too willing to believe false reports about his wife. We shall now note how these two types are combined.

D. *The Composite Type*. By this rather awkward expression is meant, as is suggested above, the union of the principal characteristics of A. with those of C. The result of this union is to be noted in a class of tales in which, (1) a lady famed for her beauty inspires the passion of a knight, a steward, or a seneschal, and he sues for her favors; (2) he is spurned, and as a result conceives a deep hatred for her; (3) he places in her bed a leper, a dwarf, a scullion, or a young knight; (4) the husband is confronted with a proof much stronger than the mere testimony of one man, and is convinced; (5) a trial by battle or by ordeal proves the lady's innocence. There are three important sets of romances showing these characteristics.

1. *The Oliva group*. The story of Oliva, in its present form, is Norse, but it was translated into that language by a Norseman living in Scotland in the thirteenth century.¹ An abstract of the story has already been given; it is sufficient here to call attention to the attempt of Milon to seduce Olif (or Oliva) and his repulse; to his pretended desire for reconciliation and his presentation of the drugged cup; to the placing of a black beggar, also drugged, in bed with her; and the summoning of the king. All these are

¹ Child, II, 39. The original text is in the *Karlamagnus Saga*, *Af Fru Olif ok Landres*, Unger, p. 51.

elements originally found in A.; the circumstance that Milon seeks reconciliation on the ground that he was merely trying her virtue, is a curious reminder of the *Cymbeline* group, as already noted in the *Erl of Tolous*. The remainder of the episode shows the indebtedness to originals of the C. type. Olif proposes the trying of her case by ordeal, mentioning in succession several methods. The king is minded to accept this offer, but is each time dissuaded by Milon, who maintains that the woman is a witch and will save herself by the exercise of her art. At last Milon is forced to agree to a trial by battle, and though his adversary is armed only with a wooden wand, is without armor, and has only a mule for a steed, while he himself has full armor and a war horse, the guilty man is overthrown. Strangely enough, he maintains that this is due to the wife's witchcraft, and is again believed by the credulous king. The elements of magic; the trial by combat in which the lady's champion is at a great disadvantage, these are Northern elements. There are numerous versions of the tale.¹

2. *The Sibilla group*. This group also deals with stories told about Charlemagne.² Sibilla is the wife of the great king, and against her a charge of infidelity is preferred, substantiated by the fact that an ugly dwarf is found in bed with her. There are many parallels, according to Mr. Child, in Spanish, Dutch, French, and German tales. It is significant that in all these the dwarf is the instrument of proof; when the story gets into Norse, however, being there told of Sisibe, a Spanish princess married to Sigmundr, the positive evidence is omitted, and the usual means of a slanderous charge of sin with a handsome thrall is substituted.

3. *The Aldingar group*. This version has also been sum-

¹ See Child, II, 39, 40.

² For references and summaries, cf. Child, 40, 41.

marized in another place. That it belongs to the composite type is proved by the presence of such A. type elements as the desire for revenge inspired by the refusal of the lady to yield to the false steward; the introduction of the lazar into the queen's bed; and the summoning of the king. Type C. is represented by the lady's claim, when charged with the crime, of her right to trial by battle. She is given forty days; no champion appears; the preparations for her execution are made. At this time a child is seen approaching; he demands that Aldingar give him the first stroke. This is granted, and with one blow the child cuts off both the steward's legs at the knee. Confession follows; the lazar becomes whole; the queen is taken back into her husband's affections. Thus the Northern element of magic and the defence by the diminutive or insignificant champion appear again in connection with elements undoubtedly Southern. In some variants of the ballad, such as the Scottish version,¹ the miraculous elements disappear with the exception of the victory of the queen's champion.

E. *The Erl of Tolous Type.*

We come now to the consideration of one of the most interesting of the Middle English romances, the *Erl of Tolous*. At first thought, this belongs to type D.; it presents some very close parallels to such tales as that of *Sir Aldingar*. At the same time, the relations of this romance to the wager group, type B., are so striking as to justify the supposition that some elements came directly from some tale belonging to that type and not through the more primitive line of development from A. to D.

In his critical edition of the romance, Lüdtke² lays great stress upon the incident of the trial by battle, presenting a large amount of material in a convincing way. He fails,

¹ Child, II, 34.

² *The Erl of Tolous*, Berlin, 1881.

however, to treat : I. The curious break in the story, when the earl, having been repulsed by the lady, retreats and the interest is shifted to the two knights. II. The close resemblance between this tale and those of the *Cymbeline* type. III. The introduction of the young knight into the lady's chamber, as evidence of her guilt. The first two of these topics require amplification ; the third will be treated incidentally.

I. It will be remembered that the earl, on hearing his captive discourse on the beauty of his lord's wife, is smitten with passion for her, so that he offers the knight his liberty if he may only be conducted to this paragon of womanhood. This is done ; the earl finds the lady more adorable than his imagination had conceived ; he attempts to induce her to grant him her favors. This she refuses with indignation ; he implores her forgiveness ; returns to his home and disappears from the story until near the end. Two knights now enter upon the scene ; both are smitten with passion for the lady ; each makes an attempt to win her love and each is repulsed. In their anger they plot her ruin. During the absence of the husband they induce a young knight to conceal himself in the chamber ; the household is aroused and he is found in the room where the lady lies asleep. The young knight is killed and the lady cast into prison. The story ends with the demand of the lady for the trial by battle, with the proclamation for a champion, followed by the coming of the Earl of Tolouse. The lady is reunited to her husband, but he lives only a short time ; after his death the earl marries her.

We have here an evident departure from the ordinary type of construction, the object being, it seems to me, to make the earl the hero and to enable him to win the lady. Logically, when he is repulsed, the earl should set about contriving her ruin. Instead of this, he is temporarily

withdrawn from the tale, and the more odious work is left to the knights, obviously dragged in to work out the remainder of the story in the orthodox manner. That the author desires to have the earl considered as the hero is manifested not only by the defence in the combat, but by the evident interest which the lady feels for him from the first. We may note, therefore, the following characteristics :

1. The elements belonging to type C. are numerous and interesting : there is the false charge preferred by knights high in the regard of the lady's husband ; the trial by combat ; the appearance of the champion from afar. Again, the champion finally wins the lady's hand, though in a manner much more modern than that by which Memering gained possession of Gunild. One notes, however, the entire absence of the miraculous, indicating entire sophistication.

2. Not less significant is the interference with the stock form of the tale by the withdrawal of the earl after his repulse ; we should expect the plot against the lady to be made by him. As it is, the significance of his first effort to win her love is lost ; that the incident remains is evidence of not very skilful patchwork, though the artistic instinct of the author led him to seek to show the lady's interest in the earl, and to prove his great love for her, before the incident of the battle.

3. The elements which unite the story to type A. are the attempt at seduction by the knights and the repulse ; the introduction of the concealed knight as a substantial proof of the charge ; and the period of exile which the lady suffers before she is vindicated. This last point indicates a radical departure from type D. and leads naturally to our next topic.

II. That there are striking resemblances between this romance and the tales belonging to type B. the following observations will make clear :

1. The man who first makes an attempt upon the lady's

honor is not an officer of the husband's court ; he has never seen her. This marks a radical variation from the usual type, and is exactly the situation in *Cymbeline*.

2. He hears her beauty vaunted by another man ; in this case a knight belonging to her husband's followers. This is closely parallel to the incident in which the wager has its inception in type B. We might here expect a wager made by the earl that he could seduce this paragon of virtue after two interviews.

3. The lady's character in the scene with the earl Barnard is strangely like that of Imogen, and this characterization is consistently kept throughout the piece. She is forgiving, innocent, unsuspecting, of sterling faith to her husband, while her beauty is celebrated in foreign lands.

4. Passing over the break which transfers the main interest from the earl to the knights, we note not only the usual indignant refusal which the lady gives, but also the same excuse used by Iachimo, that the only object was to test her constancy to her husband.

5. The knight's excuse is accepted at once and he is again received into the lady's favor.

6. The husband is a great way off, and is not summoned to the wife's room in order to see the young knight. The evidence is through testimony apparently based on fact, the supposed paramour having been murdered by the conspirators. Thus the elaborate artifice of inducing the youth to go to the lady's room and und clothe himself is of little effect. It may be noted, in passing, that the youth is merely concealed in the room ; he is not placed in the lady's bed.

7. The lady suffers many hardships in a period of exile. Since her vindication is to be by battle, this is not so essential a part of the story as in the representatives of the wager type ; it indicates a confusion of sources.

8. After many perils, she is re-united to her husband,

whose confidence in her is completely restored. The means used for vindication constitutes the chief variation from the wager type.

9. Thus the *Erl of Tolous* illustrates the *Cymbeline motif* throughout. What the precise relation is it is hard to say. It seems clear that some relation exists, and that we are therefore justified in concluding that type E. is the result of a combination of stories belonging to types D. and B.

RELATION TO THE MAIN INQUIRY.

This long investigation of the cycle of the Woman Wrongly Accused seems justified by the light which it throws upon the form of the tale preserved in the *Avowing*. It will be noted that the entire interest, in the testing of Baldwin, lies in the presentation to the husband's eyes of seemingly absolute proof of his wife's infidelity. How complete this transference of interest is, may be seen from the fact that we are not even told the lady's name. The following additional conclusions may be drawn:

1. The source of this incident in the *Avowing* is one (or many?) of the tales belonging to the cycle represented by such interesting and varied compositions as *Sir Aldingar*, the *Erl of Tolous*, and *Cymbeline*.

2. The purpose of the author is humorous; there is, therefore, no emphasis on the lady's beauty, no introduction of an attempt upon her honor. Arthur takes the place of the seneschal or the steward, but he is not actuated by malice.

3. The means employed for convincing the husband is the introduction of a strange knight into the wife's bed.¹

¹It is noticeable that in the later tales a knight was substituted for a leper; this marks the progress of taste. The *Erl of Tolous* is a good

This knight, as usual, is very young, and very innocent. He is frightened half to death by the predicament in which he finds himself.¹

4. The husband is away at the time of the plot against the wife; this is the usual situation, of course. On Baldwin's return, he is summoned to the chamber, and is there confronted by a sight startling enough to convince any man.

5. The *dénouement*, which consists in the usual confession of the trick by the guilty person, is hurried, since there was no occasion for prolonging what must have been painful for others as well as for the embarrassed woman and the frightened knight. One is thankful, for the sake of the knight at least, that Baldwin showed himself to be a man of such surpassing self-control.

This article is already too long to permit of any discussion of the stories told by Baldwin to illustrate his vows, nor is such discussion necessary in connection with the two special aims of this paper. It has been sought (1) to show the relation of this part of *The Avowing of Arthur* to the large class of popular fictions which I have named the cycle of the Three Counsels, and (2) to discuss the relation of Baldwin's vow against jealousy to other stories in which a false charge is brought against a woman, incidentally contributing something, it is hoped, to the investigation of the plot of *Cymbeline*.

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example. As already noted, in the Norse variants of the *Sibilla* group a handsome thrall, and not an ugly dwarf, is declared to be the object of the lady's affections.

¹ It will be remembered that Gawain, when placed in a similar situation (Carle of Carelyle) is very far from being embarrassed.